

African Homicide and Suicide

762
553 was given his name reveals their attempt to avoid the consequences of his act.

762 The second case arises from a breach of customary law which
159 in the old days would have meant banishment but which today
684 brings social ostracism.

[178] Suicide Case No. 2.

The suicide was caught in the act of intercourse with his full brother's wife. The Luo believe that such an act involving members of the same *Jokamio* (that is, those descended from the same mother or grandmother) brings *chira* to the whole clan. The security and solidarity of family relationships are threatened by the act because it involves quarrels which may lead to violence within the primary segment of the clan. In this case the brother did not tell the elders of the clan but merely threatened to do so. The guilty man returned to his own homestead and hanged himself in his hut. The house was destroyed and members of the extended family were cleansed by the *ja-bilo*. The cleansing ceremony took the same form as in the first case, with the addition that the village was sprinkled with medicine in order that it might continue to be used by the dead man's family.

In the next case there are two clear motives which led to the suicide. The first, perhaps the most important, lies in indigenous beliefs and attitudes, while the second lies in more modern attitudes.

Suicide Case No. 3.

159 This Luo was about 30 years old and had been employed as
762 a driver for the Government for many years. Drivers in Kenya
556 receive a relatively high salary, and in addition some take advantage of their position and make extra money by illegally
● [66] charging people for transportation. Through these activities, he became a relatively rich man and was able to marry a total of five wives at his comparatively young age. He was also wealthy